



Faculty of Engineering, Built Environment and Information Technology

Fakulteit Ingenieurswese, Bou-omgewing en
Inligtingtegnologie / Lefapha la Boetšenera,
Tikologo ya Kago le Theknološhi ya Tshedimošo

MCom (Informatics) MIT (information Systems) Department of Informatics

Brochure 2021

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1. Research in Informatics (Information Systems)

1.1 Informatics (Information Systems) as discipline

Modern organizations cannot function without information and the technology with which they gather, store, compute and make available the information. The successful application of technology is, however, more than just writing computer programs. Computer programs are important, but an understanding of the business within which the organization functions and an understanding of the use of information and information technology to support the objectives of the organization, are far more important. This can clearly be seen in the description of the discipline:

Informatics (Information Systems) is a multi-disciplinary subject, where information, Information Systems, and the integration thereof into the organization, are studied for the benefit of the entire system (individual, organization and community).

1.2 Research areas in the Department of Informatics

In general research in the department deals with fundamental concepts of information and information systems, humans as part of the information system and the broader system and IS in service of the organization and the community.

The five focus areas are

- IT management
- IS and education
- ICT for sustainable development
- Data Science
- Human-computer interaction

A detailed summary of each faculty member's research interest can be found at <http://informatics.up.ac.za>.

1.3 Objective of Masters studies (research)

A Masters graduate has an in-depth and broad knowledge of a specialized area of the discipline, is well versed in the scientific method and has proven through independent and guided research that he/she can apply the scientific method in a scientific study. The candidate must submit a research article (which might be presented to a journal for possible publication) together with the dissertation at the end of the Masters studies.

2. Admission requirements and procedures

2.1 Academic requirements

A prospective Masters student must be in possession of a four year degree in IT/IS. An attainment of at least **65%** for the honours degree in IT/IS (or equivalent) or fourth year is required. International students see point 8. All students are expected to do a course "Advanced topics in IS Research" which will be presented in the first half of the year. During this course candidates will be guided towards writing a research proposal. Candidates must obtain at least **60%** for the assignments and research

proposal in order to register for the Masters programme. Successful students can then proceed to register for the Masters programme in the second half of the year or the following year.

The supervision of postgraduate students is a time consuming process, thus, the Department **reserves the right to limit the number of students** accepted into the programme. All reasonable measures will be undertaken to ensure that students who meet the minimum requirements are accepted. In the event that departmental capacity cannot accommodate the number of students who meet the minimum requirements, the Department will **rank the students** according to the above averages, and the top performing students will be admitted to the programme, up to the limit of department teaching and supervision capacity. **For this reason students can only expect feedback on admittance by the middle of December 2020.**

More information about the seminar is given in point 6.

3. Supervision

The success of the Masters studies depends to a large extent on the successful partnership between the student and supervisor. **All students will receive a copy of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) required by UP via e-mail from Rhona van der Merwe. This MOU needs to be signed by the supervisor and student once the student has registered for the Masters degree.**

According to the MOU and to the rules within the department, each of the role players has certain responsibilities as described below:

3.1 The role of the supervisor

- The most important role of the supervisor is to guide the student and not to give active assistance to the student.
- The supervisor expects regular contact (either face to face or via e-mail) - at least once every three months. It is the responsibility of the student to arrange these sessions and to report on his/her progress during these sessions.
- These reports must be clearly written in an acceptable standard of English. It is not the supervisor's duty to do "rough editing" and (s)/he will merely concentrate on contents and structure.
- The supervisor will give feedback on any submitted work within one month.
- The supervisor has to provide motivation to faculty administration for continuation of the Masters study if its duration exceeds three years.

3.2 The role of the student

- It is the student's responsibility to arrange sessions (either contact or virtual) with the supervisor and to submit written reports for discussion.
- The student has to determine whether no other similar study has already been undertaken.
- The student is responsible to arrange for language editing and to apply the correct referencing styles.

- The student has to write the research proposal under guidance of the supervisor and other lecturers.
- The student should have laptop and internet access off campus for on-line/take home assignment purposes.

4. The difference between the MCom(Informatics), MIT(IS) and the MIT (ICT Management) degree

Note that the MIT(IS) and MCom(Informatics) are both full dissertation Masters degrees. In contrast, the MIT (ICT Management) degree consists of courses and a mini-dissertation. More info **on the MIT (ICT Management) degree** can be obtained from Mrs Rhona vd Merwe.

Email: mita@up.ac.za

Telephone: 012 420 6321

Fax: 012 362 5287

5. Application procedure

- A Masters candidate must apply for the degree on-line at www.up.ac.za. The MCom(Informatics) is administered by the Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences whereas the MIT(IS) degree is administered by the Faculty of Engineering, Built Environment and Information Technology.
- After the application has been submitted on-line, the candidate needs to complete the Masters questionnaire (see addendum A1) and send it to Mrs Rhona van der Merwe (rhona.vandermerwe@up.ac.za). Consider the research interest of the lecturers at <http://www.up.ac.za/en/informatics/article/2414608/individual-academics-research-focus-areas> and contact a potential supervisor for possible supervision
- In addition, the candidate has to send an electronic version of his/her completed Hons Research paper to Mrs Rhona van der Merwe.
- The candidate will be informed middle December of the status of the application.

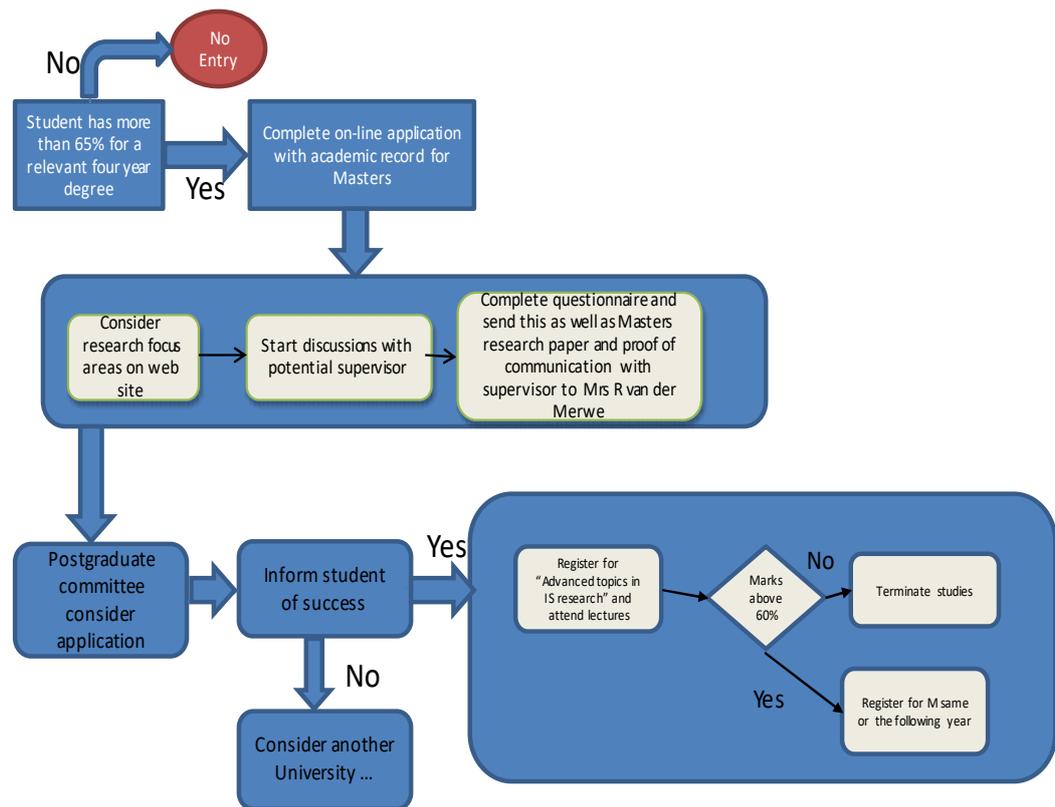


Figure 1: The application process

6. Application dates

Although the official closing date for Masters applications for 2021 is 31 May 2021, we cannot guarantee processing Masters applications for those candidates who apply online after 31 October 2020. We have an internal selection process due to limited supervision capacity and the process starts in November. However, these applications will be considered for 2022.

7. Registration, re-registration and study fees

You will be informed whether you have been accepted provisionally as Masters candidate. If so, you need to register online as a Masters preparatory student for an academic plan with code *12290001* description PG Engineering *Non-examination purposes*. The cost will be around R2000. The code ZZZ 777 will appear on your academic record. This will give you access to the campus and the library.

Once you have passed the “Advanced topics in IS Research” course with at least **60%** in July, you can register for the Masters programme. From then on students have to reregister for the Master’s degree every year of their studies (www.up.ac.za/online-registration). From the third year of registration the student will need a permission letter from the supervisor to be able to register.

With registration of the Masters you will get an on-line contract which will also be available on the Student Portal (Student Portal – on-line contract “complete the form – down load – sign – and hand in the original at Client Service Centre or courier it to the University). You can pay your registration fee and use your student number as reference. After 24 hours it should be effective on the system. Processing your on-line registration on your student portal under registration.

Registration, Financial Unsuitable, Hold, etc. problems, please contact Faculty Administration

EMS (MCom)

Ms Lerato Krappie, EMS 1-5 Foyer, Tel.: 012 420 5387
Lerato.krappie@up.ac.za

EBIT (M.IT (IS))

Mrs Stefanie Steenberg, Engineering Building 1, Room 6-6, 012 420 5315,
Stefanie.steenberg@up.ac.za

International queries & “hold”:

Mrs Jenny Lambinon – jenny.lambinon@up.ac.za
Mrs Wiida le Roux – wiida.leroux@up.ac.za

7.1 Study fees

The estimated fee for the Masters degrees in 2019 is R16 330. More information on study fees can be found at <https://www.up.ac.za/student-fees>

Fees Requirements:

Mrs Sophy Seefane – sophy.seefane@up.ac.za
Mr Frans Mothogoane – frans.mothogoane@up.ac.za
Ms Komane Lehong – komane.lehong@up.ac.za

8. Submission

The following dates are important when the student considers submission of the final dissertation:
30 June / 27 February: student informs the supervisor that he/she plans to submit before 31 August / 30 April.

31 August / 30 April: student submits signed submission form and examination copies (ring bound and electronic copies)

15 January / 15 June – e-copies with corrections as suggested by external examiners, received from students; supervisors check that all corrections have been done; student submits UPeTD upload form;

22 January / 22 June: student submits hardbound copies.

9. “Advanced topics in IS research” course

9.1 Preliminary Dates and Venues

Preliminary dates (subject to change):

Schedule

Date	Activity	Time	Venue
5 February 2021	Seminar	08:00 – 15:30	IT 5-56
5 March 2021	Seminar	08:00 – 15:30	IT 5-56
16 April 2021	Seminar	08:00 – 15:30	IT 5-56
7 May 2021	Seminar	08:00 – 15:30	IT 5-56
18 June 2021	Due date research proposal		

9.2 Seminar Course coordinator contact details:

Lecturer	Email Address	Phone number
Prof Machdel Matthee	Machdel.matthee@up.ac.za	012 420 3365

9.3 Learning content

1. The philosophy behind the main research paradigms in IS research. These are the positivist, interpretive and critical social paradigms. Students are challenged to become aware of and question the underlying assumptions in IS thinking.
2. A discussion of various Information Systems Theories, including systems, social and information theory as applied in Informatics.
3. Research methods and approaches in Information Systems.

9.4 Assessment

Assignments and a research proposal.

9.5 Application for Ethical clearance

MCom (INF) Students: Applications submitted on-line

Faculty EMS - Committees – Research Ethics

M.IT (IS) Students: Applications submitted on-line

Faculty EBIT – Research Ethics

10. Masters Questionnaire



Masters application questionnaire 2021

Dear Masters candidate,

In order to familiarize ourselves with our Masters candidates we urge you to first consider the research focus areas in the Department of Informatics before you complete these questions. Please answer the questions as truthfully as possible – we are committed to provide you with good supervision and our first step is to understand why you want to study towards a Masters and what your interest is.

Consider the research interest of the lecturers at <http://www.up.ac.za/en/informatics/article/2414608/individual-academics-research-focus-areas> and contact a potential supervisor for possible supervision

Please complete the following questions:

1. Briefly describe the role you perform in your current job.
2. Who/what influenced you the most in your life?
3. Give a short description of the research done for your Honours research paper. Would you be interested to continue with this research or do you prefer to do a new topic?
4. Why do you want to do a Masters? (At least 300 words).
5. Where did you do your Honours? Why do you want to study with the University of Pretoria?
6. Considering the topics in the research focus areas in the Department of Informatics.
 - a. What is your broad topic of interest that aligns to one of the focus areas?
 - b. What is the specific problem that you would like to address in this area?
 - c. Why is it important and why are you interested in this topic?
 - d. Are there any other topics that interest you? Name them.
7. Who did you identify as a potential supervisor?

Attach some evidence of communication with this potential supervisor (either a letter of the supervisor or e-mail correspondence).

11. INF890/ISY890: Dissertation

The compulsory dissertation which you start with once you have registered for the Masters degree, is typically a 35000 word individual report of independent research under the guidance of a supervisor. The purpose of the dissertation is to demonstrate that:

- The student can plan and execute research
- The student can interpret some practical context in terms of the theory presented in the courses and come to appropriate conclusions
- That the student can interpret and present his/her research findings.

12. Important information and web addresses

Please contact the Student Services Centre at ssc@up.ac.za (e-mail) for information regarding fees and bursaries, and/or visit <http://up.ac.za>

Please consult the following websites for general information and for information on the correct application procedure:

Details about M.IT in ICT Management and other IT programmes in the School of IT:
<http://sit.up.ac.za> or Kenneth Nkanyana (Kenneth.nkanyana@up.ac.za)

Information Science: <https://www.up.ac.za/information-science>

Computer Science: <https://www.up.ac.za/computer-science>

Please contact ssc@up.ac.za for information on other courses.

13. International students

<https://www.up.ac.za/international-cooperation-division>

International students have to provide proof of SAQA accreditation. In some cases the TOEFL/IELTS tests might be required.

SAQA: www.saqa.org.za

TOEFL (Test of English as a foreign language): www.ets.org/toefl

IELTS (International English Language Testing System): www.ielts.org

Also compare <https://www.enterprises.up.ac.za/> for information on certificate courses.

For academic information regarding postgraduate courses in Informatics, please contact Mrs Rhona van der Merwe at rhona.vandermerwe@up.ac.za

14. AVOIDING PLAGIARISM: A GUIDE FOR STUDENTS

What is plagiarism?

You commit plagiarism when in any written work you use another person's words, ideas or opinions without acknowledging them as being from that other person. You do this when you copy the work word-by-word (verbatim); or submit someone else's work in a slightly altered form (such as changing a word with one meaning to another word with the same meaning); and you do not acknowledge the borrowing in a way that shows from whom or where you took the words, ideas or reasoning.

You must provide references whenever you quote (use the exact words), paraphrase (use the ideas of another person, in your own words) or summarise (use the main points of another's opinions, theories or data).

It does not matter how much of the other person's work you use (whether it is one sentence or a whole paragraph), or whether you do it unintentionally or on purpose. If you present the work as you own without acknowledging that person, you are committing theft. Because of this, plagiarism is regarded as a very serious contravention of the University's rules which can lead to expulsion from the University.

Even if another student gives you permission to use one of his or her past assignments or other research to hand in as you own, you are not allowed to do it. It is another form of plagiarism. You are also not allowed to let anybody copy your work with the intention of passing it off as his/her work.

While academic staff must teach you about systems of referencing, and how to avoid plagiarism, you too need to take responsibility for your own academic career. Speak to your lecturer if you are at any stage uncertain as to what is required.

Information brochures on this topic are also available at the Library.

<http://www.library.up.ac.za/plagiarism/index.htm>

15. HARVARD REFERENCING

Based on and adapted from:

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BOOK – WITH SUBTITLE: According to Halliman (2001: 100-105) ...	HALLIMAN, C. 2001. Business intelligence using smart techniques: environmental scanning using text mining and competitor analysis using scenarios and manual simulation. Houston, TX: Information Uncover.
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ONE REFERENCE TO MORE THAN ONE SOURCE: This is in agreement with various other authors (Blake, 1965; Doyle, 1965; Smith, 1966; Zuary, 1967).	Listed separately in the usual way.
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